

**Testimony to the House Great Lakes & Environment Committee
In Support of the Safe Children's Products Act (HB 4763-69)**

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By Amy J. Winans

Learning Disabilities Association of MI, Board Member & Chair, Healthy Children Project
Executive Director, Association for Children's Mental Health

Thank-you Madame Chair and Committee Members for the opportunity to urge passage of this important legislation.

I am here first and foremost as a concerned citizen. My son struggled with learning disabilities from an early age. Our experiences led me to volunteer with Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan. Currently, I serve on its Board of Directors and chair its Healthy Children Project. I am employed as the Executive Director of the Association for Children's Mental Health, a statewide family organization.

Within the human brain lies our capacity to learn, talk, read, conceptualize, pay attention, interact socially, and behave appropriately. The broad spectrum of learning and developmental disorders results from interference in normal brain development and function. Learning and developmental disabilities include differences in an individual's ability to learn and remember; and may present as reduced IQ, ADHD, autism spectrum disorders and other serious problems.

In children, these developmental problems can cause tremendous challenges for children, their families, and communities. These disabilities have no "cure" and are life-long. The human and economic costs include an increased risk of dropping out of school, unplanned parenthood, substance abuse, unemployment, welfare dependency, and involvement with the criminal justice system.

The incidence of learning and developmental disabilities has been rising. They affect between 5 and 15 percent of all children under the age of 18 in the United States, or more than 12 million children under 18. In Michigan, 15% of all public school students receive Special Education programs and services.

Scientific evidence has demonstrated that some chemicals, including those that can be found in toys, cause developmental disorders. We must not expose our children to toxins that harm their brains. If getting toxics out kids' products could prevent kids and families from facing the daily challenges of a disability, we absolutely must do so. We must do all we can.

Children rely on adults to keep them safe from harm. We adults must do everything we can to keep them safe and to minimize their exposure to toxins. Please do right for Michigan children and families. Please move now to pass the Safe Children's Products Act.

Thank-you.